

THE CATLINS, STEWART ISLAND & DOUBTFUL SOUND

Home - The Catlins - Invercargill - Stewart Island - Te Anau
- Doubtful Sound - Queenstown - Home

11 March 2024

8 Day Hosted Tour

Pickups from Manawatu, Horowhenua, Kapiti and Wellington



THE CATLINS, STEWART ISLAND & DOUBTFUL SOUND

11th March to 18th March 2024

MON 11 Home – Dunedin – The Catlins (D)

This morning we arrive on our flight into Dunedin and meet our driver ready for our journey south into one of New Zealand's least explored regions. **The Catlins Forest Park**, an area where native forest meets the water's edge; a place of hidden waterfalls and river valleys; of rocky coastal bays, inlets, and estuaries where the great Pacific Ocean bites into the land. This wooded, wild coastal corner is the most unsung of South Island regions. First, we head south to Balclutha before travelling through the Southern Scenic route of the Catlins, offering a glimpse of rural New Zealand set amid native forests, fringed by high cliffs and golden beaches. This spectacular coastal stretch is home to an array of marine life – sea lions are regular beach visitors, while dolphins frolic in the shallows.

During our time in the region, stops will include:

- The largest town in the Catlins, **Owaka**
- **Kaka Point** – a seaside village
- A short walk-through mature beech forest, to the three-tiered **Purakaunui Falls** - a true icon of the Catlins, this is one of New Zealand's most photographed waterfalls, gracing many calendars, postcards and book covers.
- **Tautuku Bay** – an easy walk down to a magnificent white sand beach
- At **Curio Bay** see one of the world's most extensive and least disturbed examples of a Jurassic fossilised forest. The tree fossils you see here, similar to Kauri and Matai, are approximately 170 million years old. The forest was alive when New Zealand was part of Gondwanaland.
- Visit **Curio Scape** for the interactive **Gateway Experience** – learn about the region's ancient geological beginnings, the forces of nature; how people have transformed life on the coast many times and how the area has experienced great riches, great loss and regrowth.
- **Slope Point** – the most southerly point on the South Island of New Zealand. On a fine day, there are good views of Stewart Island/Rakiura, Bluff and the Tiwai Point aluminium smelter.
- The seaside village of **Pounaweia**, an area popular with birdwatchers.

Some locations in The Catlins may be visited on different days. Other stops and walks may also be included. Most stops include a short walk.

TUE 12 The Catlins – Invercargill (B)(D)

Today we conclude our explorations of The Catlins region and head south to Invercargill, New Zealand's most southern city. On arrival we visit the **Bill Richardson Transport World**, home to more than 300 trucks and classic vehicles, spreading across 15,000 square metres. Our next stop is the must-do visit to **E Hayes Motor Works Collection** – home of the **World's Fastest Indian**. Today, Burt Munro's original World's Fastest Indian Scout is the centre piece of the collection which features over 100 classic, vintage and modern motorcycles, automobiles, engines, equipment and memorabilia that makes up the E Hayes Motor Works Collection of classic and vintage motor vehicles. This evening we dine together in our centrally located hotel.

WED 13 Invercargill – Stewart Island (B)(D)

This morning we travel to Bluff to board our catamaran to Stewart Island. Upon arrival we walk the short distance to our accommodation. After time for a refresh, we visit the DOC headquarters in Oban to view the information available on the area before enjoying a **Village and Bays Tour** of the island. During this highlight's tour the friendly guide will provide an insight into Stewart Island's community, history, and environment. Unspoiled, incredibly beautiful and steeped in stories of Maori legend, Stewart Island is well worth this informative introduction. There is plenty of time to get off the bus for photo stops and short walks along the way. Highlights include the **Rakiura National Park** entrance at Lee Bay, Halfmoon and Horseshoe Bays and views of Paterson Inlet from Observation Rock. The remainder of the day is at leisure. Tonight, we enjoy a group dinner at our hotel.

Trip Highlights

- CATLINS FOREST PARK (including Kaka Point)
- THE CATLINS (including walks at Purakaunui Falls, Tautuku Bay, Curio Bay and Slope Point)
- TWO NIGHTS & DISCOVERY TOUR ON STEWART ISLAND (including Rakiura National Park)
- VISIT TO CURIO SCAPE INTERACTIVE GATEWAY EXPERIENCE, THE CATLINS
- E HAYES MOTOR WORKS COLLECTION
- CRUISE TO ULVA ISLAND, THROUGH PATERSON INLET
- TRAVEL THE SOUTHERN SCENIC ROUTE TO TE ANAU
- FIORDLAND NATIONAL PARK
- FULL DAY EXCURSION & CRUISE ON DOUBTFUL SOUND
- SIGHTSEEING TOUR OF QUEENSTOWN (including a visit to picturesque Arrowtown)

Catlins, Stewart Island & Doubtful Sound

Join us over 8 delightful days travelling to the beautiful southern region of New Zealand, as we discover the unspoilt Catlins, Stewart Island and Doubtful Sound.

Revealing a world of native forests fringed by high cliffs, pristine sandy beaches, sparkling bays, and dramatic cascading waterfalls, along with penguins, fur seals, sea lions and native birds is our first stop in the truly remarkable Catlins. Travelling further south we set sail to explore Stewart Island, with a glimpse into a simpler slower pace of life, over two days, including a scenic cruise to the renowned wildlife sanctuary of Ulva Island.

Travelling the Southern Scenic Route, we arrive into Te Anau, our home for the next two nights. It is from here we head off to discover the beauty of the area and the remote wilderness of Doubtful Sound. Starting our guided day-journey we sail across Lake Manapouri, travelling via coach over the breath-taking Wilmot Pass and into the heart of Fiordland National Park, to cruise Doubtful Sound with its rugged peaks, bright coloured rainforest and hidden inlets, Doubtful Sound is sure to take your breath away.

Our final journey of this majestic adventure takes us northwest, stopping in historic Arrowtown and crossing the Edith Cavall Bridge, an iconic structure crossing the Shotover River and onwards to the "Jewel in the Crown" Queenstown.

THU 14 Stewart Island

(B)(L)(D)

This morning we have a leisurely start with time for you to take a wander around Oban Village.

At midday we board a modern catamaran for a cruise to discover another perspective of Stewart Island - from the water. Today we **cruise beautiful Paterson Inlet** viewing hidden coves and unspoilt beaches while along the way learning about the early Maori history and European settlement including whaling. Our skipper and nature guide provide detailed commentary throughout the cruise and are happy to answer any questions. While on board, keep a lookout for fur seals, penguins and other wildlife, as sightings are common. A picnic lunch will be provided for us today.

Ulva Island is a renowned wildlife sanctuary where many rare and endangered native species of birdlife and plants flourish in a predator free protected environment. Here we disembark for a **45-minute easy guided walk with a specialist nature guide** through native podocarp forest. See diverse plant species and abundant birdlife, including the inquisitive weka, which are often seen on the beach. For the remainder of the cruise around Paterson Inlet, relax on board and enjoy the coastal scenery before arriving back at Oban. The remainder of the afternoon is at leisure. Tonight, we dine together again at our hotel.

FRI 15 Stewart Island - Te Anau

(B)(D)

This morning is an earlier start as we board our early morning ferry back to Bluff and reboard our coach. We begin by driving down to Stirling Point, the most southern mainland points in New Zealand, located at the beginning (and end) of State Highway 1. Stirling Point is famous for its signpost, depicting distances to major cities in the world. From here we head west through Invercargill to join the **Southern Scenic Route** - "one of the world's great undiscovered drives.

Our journey then heads inland again before meeting the coast for a stop at the seaside town of Riverton. Fondly named "Riviera of the South", Riverton is nestled at the western end of Oreti Beach, set in a picturesque location that spans Jacob's River Estuary. Riverton's surrounding beaches and estuary are natural playgrounds for local residents. Nearly 200 years old, Riverton is the oldest Pākehā settlement in Southland and one of the earliest European settlements in New Zealand. The rocky coastline, great sandy beach and surf attract people to nearby Colac Bay.

Leaving the coast behind we head north to Tuatapere which has a rich sawmilling history and is home to a logging museum, along with many other quaint reminders of the town's pioneering history. From here we continue inland on our scenic drive through to Te Anau, our home for the next two nights.

We dine together this evening at our hotel.



SAT 16 Doubtful Sound Day Excursion (B)(L)(D)

This morning after breakfast, we take a short drive to Pearl Harbour at Lake Manapouri. Here we board a comfortable launch and cruise across the crystal waters of Lake Manapouri to West Arm before boarding our coach and crossing the alpine route of Wilmot Pass, through some of Fiordland's most dense rainforest. Here we catch our first glimpse of Doubtful Sound before descending to Deep Cove.

Our **cruise on Doubtful Sound** will see us exploring the waterways of this serene and isolated fiord. Enjoy the spectacular alpine scenery including waterfalls, rainforest and mountains all the way out to the Tasman Sea, with possible sightings of bottlenose dolphins and fur seals and when in season, the rare Fiordland crested penguin. During the cruise knowledgeable and friendly nature guides will share with us their passion for the region as they point out landmarks and share information about the varied wildlife we may see. A picnic lunch is served onboard for us today.

At the end of the cruise, we retrace our journey back across Wilmot Pass and Lake Manapouri to Pearl Harbour where we re-join our coach to return to Te Anau for the evening.

After our full day out, we dine together this evening in our hotel restaurant.

SUN 17 Te Anau - Queenstown (B)(D)

Today we say goodbye to Te Anau as we travel past a large number of deer farms, a feature of this area, then across the rolling farmland of Southland. The terrain is quite bleak with tussock being among the prominent vegetation. Passing through Kingston at the southern tip of Lake Wakatipu, we travel along the Devil's Staircase and into the lakeside resort town of Queenstown.

Upon arrival, we take a sightseeing tour of Queenstown commencing with a stop at historic **Arrowtown** nestled below the beautiful peaks that surround the sparkling Arrow River. The heart of its history is Buckingham Street, a procession of small-town heritage buildings that stretches into a tree-lined avenue of tiny miner's cottages.

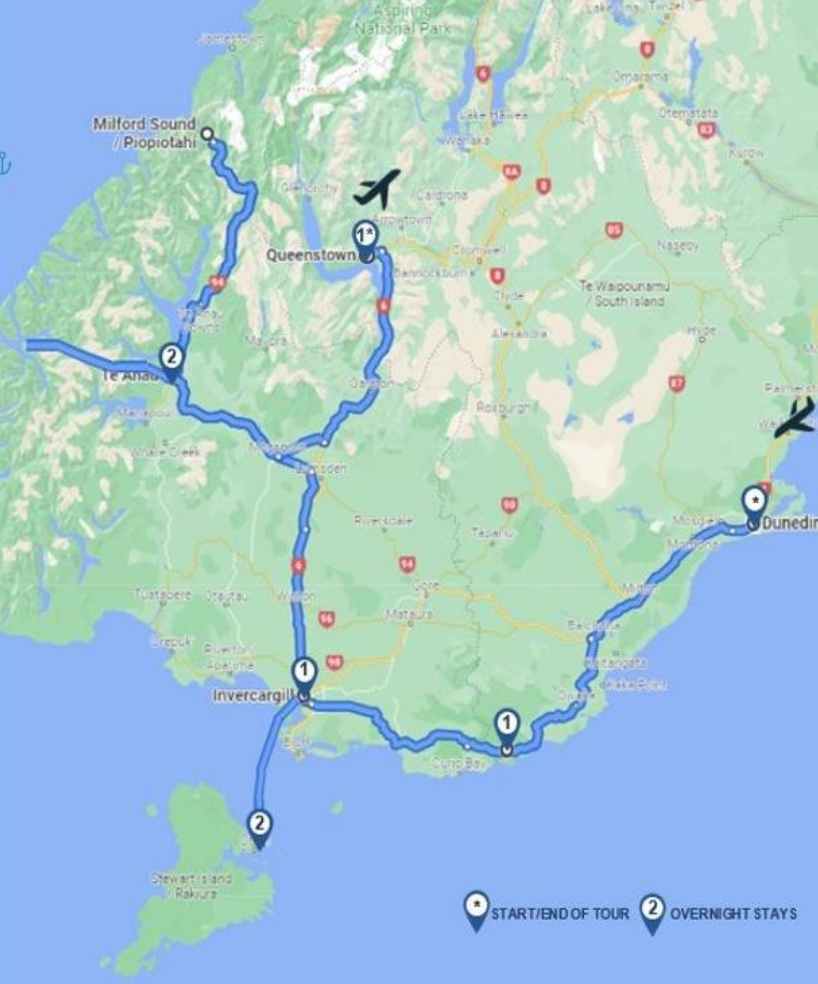
The buildings in this lovely precinct now house shops, galleries, bars, and restaurants. We have time here to sample some of the cafés, galleries and boutiques or you may wish to take a walk to the historic Arrowtown Chinese Settlement. This partially restored and well interpreted settlement is a mute reminder and tribute to the contribution made by the Chinese goldminers and businesspeople to the region's goldmining, cultural and business history.

We view the historic Edith Cavall Bridge spanning the narrow canyon of the rugged Shotover River as we approach Queenstown, then will take a drive through the town to our hotel.

This evening we dine at a local restaurant for our farewell dinner together.

MON 18 Queenstown - Home (B)

Our time exploring the southern regions of New Zealand sadly comes to a close today, as we transfer to Queenstown Airport for our flight home.



CATLINS, STEWART ISLAND & DOUBTFUL SOUND

8 Day Tour Includes

Fully hosted by a YOURTours Host

Quality Accommodation & Coach

Sightseeing and Entrance Fees as indicated on itinerary

Domestic Flights and Home Pick-up*


Meals as per itinerary

Departs 11th March 2024

Price \$5,355 pp twin share

Price \$6,255 single

*** Domestic Flights with Air New Zealand Wellington to Dunedin and Queenstown to Wellington included in price. Flights from other ports on application.*

 Find us on Facebook

You are invited to join us on one of our fully hosted small group tours, with a maximum of 18 guests.

We are based on the beautiful Kapiti Coast with our guests joining us from all corners of New Zealand. We believe you will be pleasantly surprised by just how much we include in our tour price.

You can be reassured that your tour host will always be one of our friendly well-experienced YOURTours Hosts, ensuring everything is taken care of from start to finish, allowing you to relax and enjoy your tour.

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